



**Model citizen:** Arnie Wegner works on the details of a wooden ship he is building in his Institute home.

Wegner moved to the community because of its fresh air.



# Institute is cornerstone of Door Co. 'quiet side'

By Lisa Sumter

Press-Gazette

INSTITUTE — They call this the quiet side of the peninsula.

This Door County community perched along State Highway 57 certainly supports that claim.

Sevastopol School and SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Church are the most notable landmarks. The business district boasts an antiques and collectibles store, a tavern and an auto repair shop. Farms and private homes round out Institute.

Six miles away, Sturgeon Bay offers shopping and jobs. Nature provides entertainment options throughout the area for fishermen, swimmers, campers and boaters.

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photos by  
Ken Wesely

Residents say Institute is home to many retirees, but

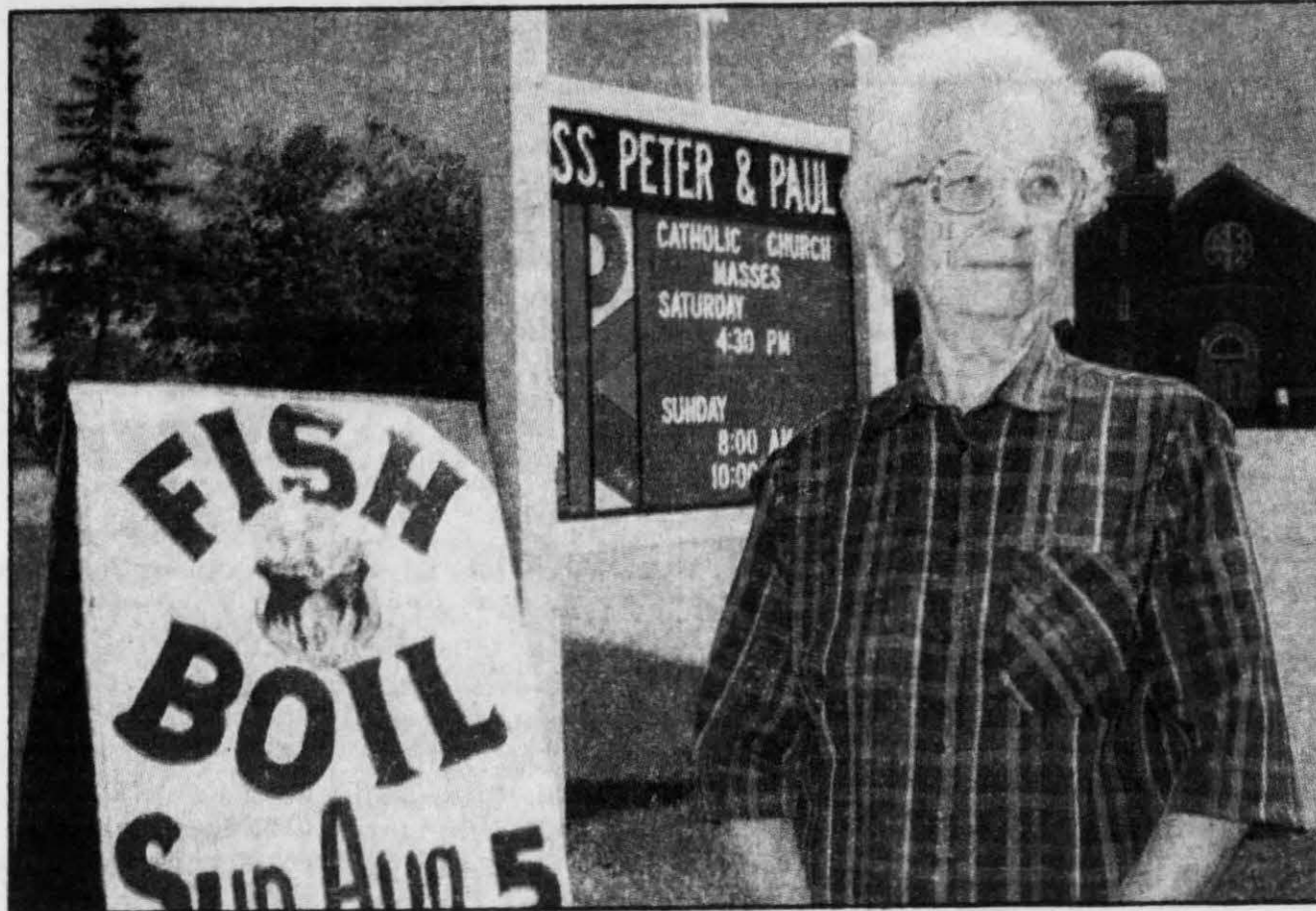
young families are moving in, too.

Arnie Wegner, 78, came to Door County in 1960 and to Institute in 1975 for the "clean, fresh air." He likes the proximity to Sturgeon Bay, coupled with the country atmosphere.

The front of Wegner's home at 4568 Highway 57 is a workshop. The row of large windows on the building, a former grocery store, is the perfect site for one hobby — raising orchids.

Wegner's handcrafted wooden sailing ships and a variety of other nautical treasures lend a seafaring air to the shop.

"I had a grandfather who was a captain on a sailing ship on the Great Lakes," he says. "I always enjoyed boat-



**History buff:** Loretta Junion of Institute stands outside a community landmark, SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Church.

ing and water." Wegner and other senior residents admit there is little to entice Door County tourists to stop here, but that's OK. It helps maintain that "quiet side" feeling.

"It hasn't taken on the development of the other side — thank goodness," he says. "That side is gradually being overrun and overcrowded, I think. But the minute anyone raises a fuss, they say 'Oh, you're against progress.'"

Signs of progress are not absent in Institute. The moderate flow of highway traffic is dotted with gravel trucks and other construction vehicles as work continues at the community's two schools.

Baseball diamonds are in at a new community park, with tennis and basketball courts planned.

At Sevastopol School, a \$1.5 million addition is being built. At SS. Peter and Paul School, workers are constructing a playground.

Please see **Institute/B-2**

nity landmark, SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Church.



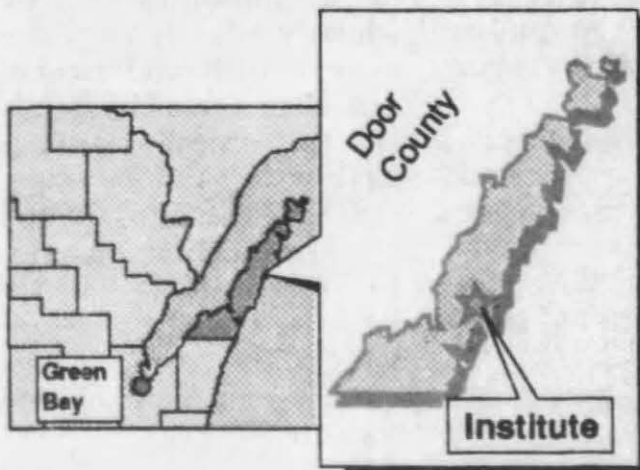
**School leader:** Lee Kotyza is preparing for his third year as Sevastopol High School principal.

## The Institute file

- ☐ **Population:** 75, estimates by Carl Scholz, former Sevastopol School District superintendent.
- ☐ **Cycling slumber party:** People on bike tours in Door County often spend the night at Sevastopol School. Community groups treat the cyclists to dinner or breakfast.
- ☐ **Divine delivery:** St. Aloysius Institute was run by Benedictine sisters when it opened in 1892. Loretta Junion says the sisters also ran the post office.

**"(Institute is) a quiet community that exists harmoniously with the people."**

— Lee Kotyza,  
Sevastopol principal



# Institute

Lee Kotyza is getting ready for his third year as high school principal. He calls Institute a "quiet community that exists harmoniously with the people."

Baseball and softball leagues are serious business.

"They're really big on baseball here," says Suzanne Derby, who can see the town park and ball fields from her shop, Essentials, 4530 Highway 57. She sells antiques, collectibles, ice cream and other fare found in a convenience store.

"I even sponsor a team," she says, pointing to a schedule and newspaper clippings lauding her team's success.

Loretta Junion, 4574 State Highway 57, is Institute's unofficial historian.

Outside her living room window,

Junion sees the past melded with the present. St. Aloysius Institute, a boarding school for which the community was named, was built in 1892 at the site of SS. Peter and Paul.

A nearby four-unit apartment house was Institute's first residence, built as a single-family home in 1866.

Settled by German and Irish families, the community was built on farming. Junion's father was a farmer until 1940, when he sold the family tract and built the house where Junion, 83, lives today.

Junion quickly waves off the notion of leaving Institute. She is active in church activities, eagerly pointing out items she has collected for a craft sale at the church's annual fish boil.

"It's my community," she says.

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■ **Next week:** Sobieski in Oconto County